

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND CONSERVATION



GREG GIANFORTE, GOVERNOR

1539 ELEVENTH AVENUE

STATE OF MONTANA

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE: (406) 444-2074  
FAX: (406) 444-2684

PO BOX 201601  
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-1601

DECISION MEMO

ACTIONS OF A SPECIAL NATURE

St. Mary and Milk River Project  
June 2020  
Milk River Joint Board of Control  
Routine Operation and Maintenance on Drop 1 Structure  
Location Milk River Project, St. Mary Unit, in Sections 4 and 10, T37N, R11W  
Glacier County

PURPOSE AND NEED

The Milk River Joint Board of Control, in conjunction with Reclamation, Montana Area Office, plans to provide routine operation and maintenance on hydraulic drop structure, Drop 1, within the St. Mary Unit of the Milk River Project in June 2020. Regular maintenance of the hydraulic drop structures within the St. Mary Unit of the Milk River Project will prevent catastrophic failure due to the aging infrastructure of the canal system.

Explanation of the decision(s) that must be made regarding the proposed action:

DNRC approved the grant to provide funding for the Hydraulic Drop Structure O&M on Drop 1.

DNRC is not required to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for actions that qualify for a CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION or justified by a PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW; or are ACTIONS OF A SPECIAL NATURE (ARM 36.2.523(5)). These actions are subject to review for EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES that would require an EA or an EIS.

ACTIONS OF SPECIAL NATURE (ARM 36.2.523)

- Administrative actions: routine, clerical or similar functions of a department, including but not limited to administrative procurement, contracts for consulting services, and personnel actions.
- Minor repairs, operations, or maintenance of existing equipment or facilities.
- Investigation and enforcement: data collection, inspection of facilities or enforcement of environmental standards.
- Ministerial actions: actions in which the agency exercises no discretion, but rather acts upon a given state of facts in a prescribed manner.

- Actions that are primarily social or economic in nature and that do not otherwise affect the human environment.

**EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES**

ARM 36.11.447 defines those circumstances that may require additional environmental review in an EA or EIS. Will the proposed action affect one or more of the following resources, species or situations in the project area? If the resource, species or situation is present, but project design avoids potential effects on the resource, the answer is NO. A YES answer indicates that additional environmental review (EA or EIS) is required.

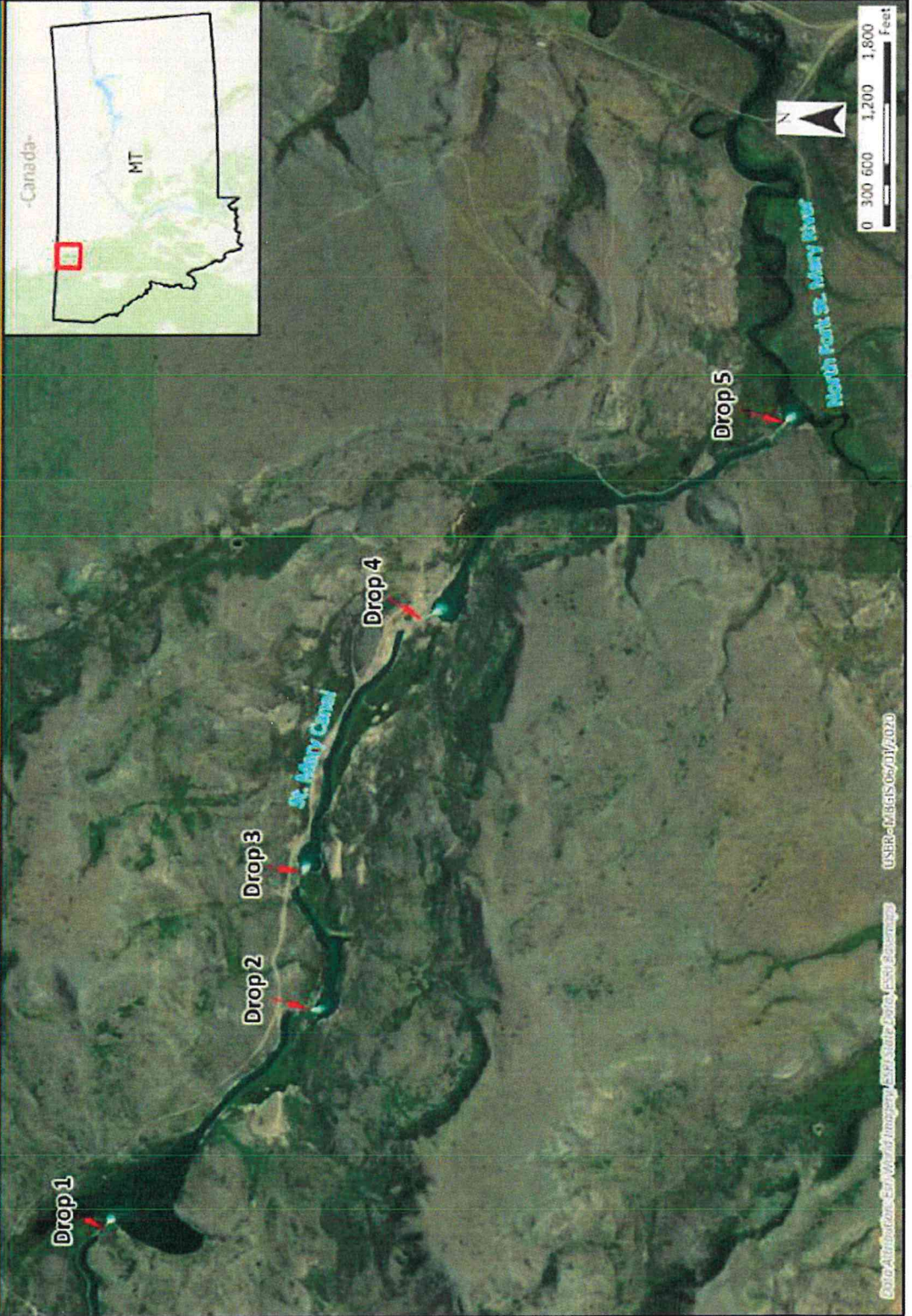
Grant or Loan funds will be used for any ground disturbing activities, such as installation of monitoring wells or test pits, or replacement of existing equipment or facilities at:

- Sites with high erosion risk;
- Federally listed threatened and endangered species or critical habitat for threatened and endangered species as designated by the USFWS;
- Within municipal watersheds;
- The Streamside Management Zone (SMZ) of fish bearing streams or lakes, except for modification or replacement of bridges, culverts and other crossing structures;
- State natural area;
- Native American religious and cultural sites;
- Archaeological sites; or
- Historic properties and areas.
- Project overlaps other actions that when considered as cumulative may be subject to environmental review.
- Violations of any applicable state or federal laws rules or regulations.

The project listed above meets the definition of Actions of a Special Nature, Categorical Exclusion or Programmatic Review including specified conditions and Extraordinary Circumstances.

<b>Prepared By:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Demitra Blythe	<b>Date:</b> 3/4/2021
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# HYDRAULIC DROP STRUCTURE REPLACEMENT Drop's 1 through 5



USBR-MRIS 07/1/2020

Go to [Albuquerque Canal](#) / [North Fork St. Mary River](#) / [St. Mary Canal](#) / [Drop 1](#) / [Drop 2](#) / [Drop 3](#) / [Drop 4](#) / [Drop 5](#)